

On the need for specifiers

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1 Introduction

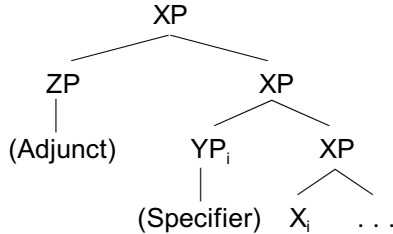
- (1) What is the nature of the relationship between a head and its specifier?
- (2) Rowlett (1998b: 111): . . . spec–head agreement is in fact nothing more than spec–head *anti-disagreement*, guaranteeing feature compatibility rather than identity.
- (3) Specifiers:
 - a. They occupy a clearly defined position with respect to a relevant head; and/or,
 - b. they enter into a clearly defined relationship with that head.
- (4) [_{IP} [_{Spec} Jean] fume . . .] (French)
 J. smokes
 ‘Jean smokes.’
- (5) Jean ne_i fume . . . [_{NegP} [_{Spec} pas] t_i . . .] (French)
 J. NEG smokes NEG
 ‘Jean doesn’t smoke.’
- (6) (In certain functional projections,) in the absence of an overt specifier:
 - a. the specifier position is nevertheless projected;
 - b. this position is occupied by a non-overt phrase; and,
 - c. this non-overt phrase enters into the same kind of relationship with the relevant head (for example, spec–head agreement) as do overt specifiers.
- (7) [_{IP} [_{Spec} *pro*] fuma . . .] (Spanish)
 smokes
 ‘He/She smokes.’
- (8) Juan no_i fuma [_{NegP} [_{Spec} OP] t_i . . .] (Spanish)
 J. NEG smokes
 ‘Juan doesn’t smoke.’
- (9) Conclusions:
 - a. *There is no need* to claim that, as a matter of principle, the specifier position is active in functional projections, and occupied by a possibly non-overt phrase.
 - b. *Under considerations of economy*, we should therefore deem that the specifier is *not* projected, unless there are good reasons to believe otherwise (Rowlett 1998a; see below).
 - c. Consequently, some functional projections, previously thought to project a position occupied by a non-overt specifier, are in fact specifier-free.

2 What are specifiers?

- (10) Semantic specifiers:
 - a. *too* strong b. *safely* arrive

XP
(Specifier) X'
X (Complement)

(13) Specifiers versus adjuncts:



“Categorial restrictions on specifiers follow from the nature of the type of agreement that is involved” (Hoekstra 1991: 28, (42)).

(15) [_{IP} [_{Spec} *pro*] fuma . . .] (Spanish)
 smokes
 ‘He/She smokes.’

(16) Juan no_i fuma [NegP [Spec OP] t_i . . .] (Spanish)
J. NEG smokes
'Juan doesn't smoke.'

(17) a. (Io) parlo italiano. (Italian)
 b. (Yo) hablo español. (Spanish)
 c. *(I) speak English. (English)
 d. *(Je) parle français. (French)
 'I speak Italian/Spanish/English/French.'

(19) a. *pro* parlo italiano. (Italian)
 b. *pro* hablo español. (Spanish)
 (= (17a, b))

(20)

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graph TD
    IP --> Spec
    IP --> I_prime[I']
    Spec --> pro
    I_prime --> I_deg[I°]
    I_prime --> ellipsis[...]
    I_deg --- P[["+PRONOUN"]]
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(Rizzi 1982a)

- (21) Properties co-distributing with null subjects:
- the absence of overt expletive pronouns;
 - the possibility of post-verbal subjects; and,
 - the absence of *that*-trace filter violations.

b. SpecNegP

- (22) Haegeman (1995: 107):

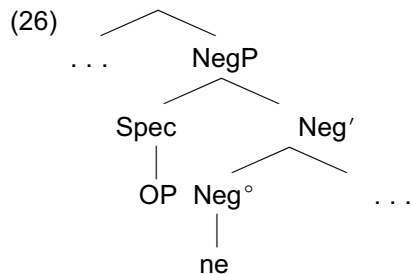
“Negative sentences are sentences which minimally have a NEG-feature associated with a functional head of the extended projection of V, i.e., of the clausal domain.”

- | (23) | | Neg° | SpecNegP | |
|------|--------------|------|----------|---------------------------------------------------|
| a. | French | ne | pas | (Pollock 1989; Rowlett 1993) |
| b. | Fon | ǎ | má | (da Cruz 1992, reported in DeGraff 1993: 87) |
| c. | Navajo | da | doo | (Speas 1991: 394–395) |
| d. | West Flemish | en | nie | (Haegeman 1995) |
| e. | Breton | ne | ket | (Stephens 1993: 397–398; Borsley et al. 1996: 67) |

- (24) Juan no_i fuma [NegP [Spec OP] t_i . . .] (Spanish)
 J. NEG smokes
 ‘Juan doesn’t smoke.’

- (25) a. Perché hai detto che Gianni è partito ? (Italian, from Rizzi 1990)
 why have:2SG said that Gianni is left
 ‘Why did you say that Gianni left?’

- b. Perché *non* hai detto che Gianni è partito ?
 why NEG have:2SG said that Gianni is left
 ‘Why didn’t you say that Gianni left?’



- (27)
- | | [CP | . . . | [IP | [IP | . . . | [IP | [IP | . . . |]]]] |
|----------|--------|-------|-----|--------|-------|-----|-----|-------|------|
| a. (25a) | Perché | | t | | | t | | | |
| b. (25b) | Perché | | t | OP non | | *t | | | |

- (28) Acquaviva (1996: 295): “This approach to negative islands therefore involves the additional assumption that the SpecNegP position is filled even when it contains no lexical material.”

- (29) Haegeman (1995: 200): “. . . we assume that there is a non-overt contentive operator in the relevant spec–head relation with *non*. We propose that the non-overt operator occupies SpecNegP.”

- (30) Gde_i ty skazal, čto Ivan ukral den’gi t_i? (Colloquial Russian, Brown 1999: 25, (18))
 where you said that Ivan stole money
 ‘Where did you say Ivan stole the money?’

- (31) *?Gde_i ty [_{NegP} [_{Spec} OP] ne skazal, čto Ivan ukral den'gi t_i] ? (Brown 1999: 25, (17))
 where you NEG said that Ivan stole money
 'Where didn't you say Ivan stole the money?'

5 Are non-overt specifiers really needed?

- (32) The negative cycle in the history of French (Rowlett 1998b: 90, (4)):

- a. jeo ne di.
 - b. je ne dis (pas).
 - c. je ne dis pas.
 - d. je (ne) dis pas.
 - e. je dis pas.
- 'I don't say.'

- (33) Julie ne veut voir personne.
 Julie *ne* wants to:see *personne*
 'Julie doesn't want to see anyone.'

- (34) Assumptions being questioned:
- a. Certain specifier positions are always projected and syntactically active; where they are not filled by an overt phrase, they are occupied by null constituents; and,
 - b. SpecIP is projected in canonical null-subject languages; SpecNegP is projected in languages whose negative marker is a head.

a. SpecIP

- (35) a. O Janis xtes meta apo poles prospathies sinandise ti Maria.
 the-John- NOM yesterday after from many efforts met the-Mary-ACC
 'John finally met Mary yesterday.' (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (13))
- b. *John *after many efforts* has met Mary.

- (36) a. . . . epidi o Janis an erthi i Maria tha figi.
 because the-John-NOM if comes the-Mary-NOM FUT leave
 ' . . . because if Mary comes, John will leave.' (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (14))
- b. * . . . because John *if Mary comes* will leave.

- (37) Enas heretise ti Maria. (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (15a))
 one greeted the-Mary-ACC
 'A certain person/one of the people greeted Mary.'
 ≠ 'Someone greeted Mary.'

- (38) a. A student filed every article.
 $\exists x$ (x student) $\forall y$ (y article) (x filed y)
 $\forall y$ (y article) $\exists x$ (x student) (x filed y)
- b. kapjos fititis arhiothetise tahe arthro. (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (16a))
 some student-NOM filed every article
 $\exists x$ (x student) $\forall y$ (y article) (x filed y)

- (39) a. *Tots els estudiants_i es pensen que ells_i aprovaran. (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (20))
 all the students think that they will-pass
 'All the students_i think that they_i will pass.'

- b. Tots els jugadors_i estan convencus que guanyaran ells_i.
all the players are convinced that will-win they
'All the players_i are convinced that they_i are the ones who will win.'
- (40) a. There arrived a man/*the man/*every man. (English)
b. Il est arrivé un homme/*l' homme. (French)
EXPL is arrived a man/ the man
c. Er heeft iemand/ *Jan een huis gebouwd. (Dutch)
EXPL has someone/Jan a house built
- (41) Efase ena pedi/ o Jorgos/ kathe filos mu (Greek)
arrived a child-NOM/the-George-NOM/every friend mine
'A child/George/every friend of mine arrived.' (Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou's (24))
- (42) a. EXPL-V-S (e.g., There arrived a man.)
b. *pro*-V-S (e.g., *pro* fuma un hombre.)
- (43) The null-subject parameter:
a. Null subjects
b. Absence of expletives
c. Free inversion
d. Absence of *that*-trace effects
- (44) a. *Who_i did you say that t_i was coming?
b. Quien has dicho que viene?
who have:2SG said that comes
'Who did you was coming?'

b. SpecNegP

- (45) Expletive negation in French (Rowlett 1998b: 27–28, (57), (58a))
a. Je doute qu' il *ne* soit là.
I doubt that he *ne* be:SUBJ there
'I doubt he's there.'
b. Marie est plus grande que *n'* est son frère.
Marie is more tall than *ne* is her brother
'Marie is taller than her brother is.'
c. Qui *ne* souhaite partir en vacances?
who *ne* wishes leave on holidays
'Who (on earth) doesn't want to go on holiday?'
d. Elle a peur que tu *ne* sois là.
she has fear that you *ne* be:SUBJ there
'She's worried you might be there.'
- (46) a. Pourquoi crains-tu qu' elle *ne* dise qu' elle t' aime? (Rowlett 1998b: 32, (71))
why fear you that she *ne* say:SUBJ that she you loves
'Why are you afraid she might say she loves you?'
b. Comment crains-tu qu' il *ne* se comporte? (Haegeman 1995: 161, (5b))
how fear you that he *ne* REFL behaves
'How do you fear he will behave?'

(47) [_{CP} ... [_{IP} t ... [_{IP} t ne [_{IP} t ...]]]]]]] (= (46a))

(48)

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      / \
     /   \
    ...   NegP
         / \
        /   \
       Neg°  ...
        |
       ne
  
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(49) Juan no_i ha visto a nadie_i.
 Juan NEG has seen to NO-ONE
 'Juan hasn't seen anyone.'

(50) Perché_i non hai detto che t_i Gianni è partito ?
 why NEG have:2SG said that Gianni is left
 'Why didn't you say that Gianni left?'

(51) The Neg Criterion:
 a. Each Neg X° must be in a spec–head relationship with a Neg operator.
 b. Each Neg operator must be in a spec–head relationship with a Neg X°.

(52) Never would I do that.

(53) a. * ... da Valère [ketent [me niets]] en- was.
 that Valère satisfied with nothing NEG was
 b. ... da Valère [me niets]_i [ketent t_i] en- was.
 that Valère with nothing satisfied NEG was
 '... that Valère wasn't satisfied with anything.'

6 Conclusion and summary

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